



Semper Paratus

Newsletter of
James Sheahan
Catholic High School

Volume 24 Number 16
Thursday 28 May 2009

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thursday 28 May
Year 12 FACTS Day

Monday 1 June
Year 11 Exams
commence

Tuesday 2 June
Staff Development Day
(Pupil free day)
Year 11 students to attend
if they have exams
scheduled

Friday 5 June
Elective Music Evening

Monday 8 June
Public Holiday

Tuesday 9 June
Years 7 and 9 Exams
commence

Monday 15 June
Years 8 and 10 Exams
commence

Friday 19 June
P&F Trivia Night

Thursday 25 June
Casual Clothes Day

Friday 26 June
Music Concert
Kenna Hall

Wednesday 1 July
Senior
Parent/Teacher/Student
Evening

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
Amen.*

Reinhold Niebuhr

Teenagers and Alcohol

By now I am sure you are aware that a number of students in Year 12 were suspended from school for having consumed alcohol prior to our school disco. I do not want to continue to regurgitate the events surrounding last week, and the disappointment I felt in students having felt the need to do this prior to attending a school function, but I do want to impress the following on parents. My whole approach is to promote the *safety* of our students - your children - as best we possibly can. Obviously, they are only in our care usually for about 7 hours per day.

Are you aware of where your child is during the afternoons and evenings (particularly weekends)? Have you checked they are actually where you think they are? Teens who think their parents will check on their whereabouts are less likely to be involved in risk-taking behaviour. Supervision of teenagers is important. Supervision of their activities is also extremely important. Do the parents of your children's friends hold similar values and have the same rules as you do? How do you know?

Have you spoken to your child about alcohol and more importantly about teenage drinking? According to the Australian Federal Government, young people between the ages of 18-24 are the most at risk group. Almost two-thirds of people in this age group drink at risky or high-risk levels. There is no safe level of alcohol consumption for teenagers, especially those under 18.

It is unlawful for alcohol to be supplied to someone under the age of 18, and can result in a \$1100 fine.

The Australian Government recommends that parents discuss alcohol with their children before they reach 10-11 years.

At our school we attempt to provide relevant and helpful information and education to students regarding alcohol and other drugs. It is vital that this is followed up at home. We will provide further sessions to all students in Years 10 – 12 prior to the end of Term 2. The Schools Police Liaison Officer will work with these year groups on topics such as risk taking behaviour, alcohol and binge-drinking and the legal implications of under-age drinking.



Teenage drinking is illegal. It is illegal to supply alcohol to a minor. Teenage drinking can lead to other unwanted and unplanned incidents including: unwanted sex, being sexually assaulted, being the victim of violence, difficulty coping with school work and/or work commitments, losing control of themselves, alcohol poisoning and loss of consciousness.

Here are some websites that parents may find useful in discussing this issue with their child:

www.whatstherush.org.au
www.alcohol.gov.au
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Some of the information provided was taken from the Australian Government website on alcohol.

Should parents or students have concerns that they would like to discuss regarding their child and alcohol, our school counsellor, Ms Bongini is always available to offer helpful, confidential advice.

Again, I reiterate my main motivation in bringing this to your attention: I only want our students to be safe. I am absolutely sure that this is your prime concern as well.

Please be assured we will again evaluate our school disco rules and procedures and then we will make the difficult decision whether or not they continue.

Health Warning – Human Swine Influenza

Any students who have been in the following countries recently are to be excluded from school for 7 days following their travel: Mexico, USA, Canada, Japan and Panama.

In addition, I am advised by NSW Health to remind all families and community members about good hygiene practices and how to minimise the spread of infections. Simple precautions include:

- Covering your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze
- Washing your hands after contact with soiled tissues or any contact with nose or throat discharge
- If students or staff are sick, please stay at home and seek medical attention if appropriate.

Please be aware that if a case of swine flu is reported, then NSW Health will investigate each case identified and advise schools on appropriate action eg closing the school.

*Craig Wattam
Principal*

HELPING STUDENTS PREPARE FOR EXAMS

Over the next three weeks all students in Years 7 to 11 will be sitting Half Yearly Exams. These exams will contribute significantly to student assessment marks, as reflected on their school reports and results. The exams will also make a significant contribution to the determination of student A to E performance grades and their rankings in individual subjects. The Half Yearly Exam schedule is:

Year 11 Exams	June 1 – 5
Years 7 and 9 Exams	June 8 – 12
Years 8 and 10 Exams	June 15 - 19

There are a number of ways in which parents and carers can help their children prepare for formal exams:

- Discuss exams with your child, stressing that they are important and require preparation to achieve success
- Encourage your child to create a revision timetable (for example, revising a different subject each night in the fortnight before the exams start)
- Monitor your child's activities in the lead up to exams and the additional homework time they allow for exam revision

- Visit the James Sheahan website and download the exam timetable and relevant exam study guides (These will appear on the website a minimum of two weeks before the scheduled exam period)
- Directly help your child with revision by quizzing their knowledge and understanding of their work – this can be done easily by asking to see their note or exercise books and having them explain terms, definitions, equations, facts and information
- Where spelling lists are part of the course, test them at home
- If longer responses are required, encourage them to practise exam-condition responses at home
- Encourage your child to create ongoing summaries of their work – this can involve keeping a revision book at home for each subject in which they summarise the main ideas or information at the end of each day or week
- During the exam period and the time immediately leading into exams set limitations on visitors, nights out, unnecessary interruptions or distractions (eg television or texting)
- Discuss their results in the weeks after the exams and show a strong, genuine interest in their successes and areas of weakness

Exams constitute an integral part of schooling and by promoting good study habits and student attitudes towards exams, parents and carers are helping to build the ground for future academic success. They also build work habits that are not only expected at school but also in the work place, and encourage our youth to take greater responsibility for their own futures.

*Peter Meers
Acting Assistant Principal*

NEWS FROM THE RE DEPARTMENT Family Mass

Thank you to all of those family and friends who were able to attend the Family Mass last Wednesday. It was a moving event which had a focus on appreciating those 'whom we cherish'. Father Ephrem performed a moving service and Mr Daniel Keep's recollections on his career and journeys really proved the importance of valuing those people who are close to us.



Celebrating the Eucharist as a faith community is vital to us as a

Catholic school and it was made even more special by the attendance of Sister Paula. Sister Paula was representing our Mercy Family. Her presence was a good reminder to our students of our heritage and ongoing responsibility as a school with a Mercy charism.



I would like to thank all of those staff and students who were involved in the Mass. It is only with the assistance of so many people that we are able to share in these special events in such a beautiful way.

*Amber Calleja
Religious Education Coordinator*

2 UNIT STUDIES OF RELIGION EXCURSION

On Tuesday 19 May, Mrs Humphrys' Year 11 Studies of Religion class travelled to Sydney for a tour of the Central Synagogue at Bondi Junction and to attend lectures at the Academy BJE. Rabbi Paul Lewin presented students with an entertaining and insightful introduction to Jewish Ethical System and Sacred Texts.

The Synagogue was also very special and provided students with information on the role of the synagogue in the life of Jewish adherents. The experience will greatly help them in their future studies for the HSC.

Our last stop was the Jewish Holocaust Museum. This is always a very emotional and moving

experience. We were privileged to be able to hear stories from survivors of the Holocaust. They tell their story so that such horror will never happen again. It was an experience we will not forget.

I would like to thank Mr Tilston for being our bus driver for the day and Mrs Calleja for organising this very worthwhile excursion.

Susanne Humphrys

EQUESTRIAN NEWS UPDATE

Last weekend Alexandra Wolters-Mannix, Craig and Jacob Hausler went to The Rock (past Wagga) to compete at the NSW Pony Club Jumping Equitation Championships.

They competed in 3 competitions over 2 days with Alex and Craig in the 15yrs and under 17yrs and Jacob in the 13yrs and under 15yrs. At State events they give placings to 10th and Alex finished with a 1st, 6th and 7th; Craig with an 8th, and Jacob with an 8th. Congratulations to all these riders.

This is the final update before Coonabarabran starts on Friday 29 May. This year, our team consists of Jacob and Craig Hausler, Eden and Lauren McDonnell, Amelia White, Alexandra Wolters-Mannix, and Carly Wright. On behalf of the school I would like to wish our team the best of luck over the four days of competition.

Jan Hayes

CSIRO'S 'LAB ON LEGS' VISIT

We are very excited that on Wednesday 3 June the CSIRO's 'Lab On Legs' will visit our school. While here they will present an interactive science program with the following themes:

Cool Chemistry Show - for Year 8
Gene Technology in Action - for Year 12 Biology

The CSIRO Science Education Centre create a dynamic interactive forum within which students can take a hands-on role. Their program engages students in eye-opening interactive science theatre and hands-on experiments which have been developed around real-life CSIRO research. Our students will become the scientists, rather than just reading about them.

CSIRO, more than being the largest employer of scientists in Australia, is one of the most respected science organisations in the world. The CSIRO Science Education Centre is able to draw on the benefits of this, and provide quality science programs for students, teachers and public audiences throughout NSW. The CSIRO presenters have experience in teaching and performing. Their amusing and lively approach to science is both engaging and educational.

*Patricia Harvey
Science*

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

Recently we had the first meeting of our environmental group. Many ideas were discussed as to the type of action we could take with the limited amount of time and funds that we have available. It was decided that it was important at this stage to focus on our local school environment. The main areas we wished to focus on were energy saving and recycling. These actions would not only reduce our carbon footprint but also help preserve our nation's diverse ecosystems.

Our next meeting will be Thursday 28 May in T6 at lunch time. Any students interested in joining our group are most welcome to attend. Those students who were at the first meeting will bring along results of their research into areas we considered worth doing.

Susanne Humphrys



ADOLESCENTS COPING WITH EMOTIONS

Small Group Workshop

Years 8-9 Term 3

The Curran Centre Adolescent Unit has approached our school to run a program designed to teach skills to deal with emotional changes that occur during adolescence.

ACE aims to increase an individual's ability to cope effectively with the changes and to increase their resilience. It teaches skills and strategies in problem solving, improving relationships with others, coping with feelings and building self esteem.

How is ACE run?

- in small groups (8 students)
- over 8 weeks with one session a week during Term 3 in class time
- facilitated by 2 group leaders - an Adolescent Counsellor from Community Health Service and the School Counsellor
- Free of charge.

We are asking for volunteers to participate. If you and your child think this may be helpful, please contact myself for more detailed information so that you may come to a decision.

Ms Bongini
School Counsellor

NOMINATIONS FOR PARISH COUNCIL

New nominations for the Parish Pastoral Council are being invited. You may nominate either yourself or another parishioner (but please get their permission first!), submitting name, address and phone number

in writing to the Parish Office by the end of May. You could also include information on the length of time in the parish and areas of interest or concern for the parish community.

A meeting will take place in Kenna Hall on Tuesday 16 June at 7.30pm with present Parish Pastoral Councillors to consider whether you wish to fill one of the five vacancies as half go off the Parish Pastoral Council every two years.

If more than 5 nominations are received, then an election from the nominees will be held by all parishioners.

Fr Carl Mackander
Parish of St Mary and St Joseph, Orange

P&F NEWS

Members from the newly formed Music Support Group called upon the P&F at last week's meeting for a donation of \$1500 for the purchase of much needed equipment for the School Concert Band. The committee voted in favour of their request, and also granted \$20000 towards a new PA system for the School Hall. Students who will be competing for the school at the Coonabarabran Equestrian Expo were also given a contribution for expenses they will incur and the social tennis players can look forward to having a hit at lunchtime with new racquets which will be purchased shortly.

The P&F Committee is always happy to hear from special interests groups within the school and if possible give financial support or a helping hand. We are now asking you to help us rebuild our funds by coming along to the Sheahan Family Trivia Night to be held on Friday 19 June. Our school concert band would just love to have a set of Timpani Drums!

Tania Rusden
Publicity Officer



P&F Family Trivia Night

Date: Friday 19 June 2009
Time: 7.30pm
Cost: \$5.00ea (sitting at tables of eight)
Where: James Sheahan School Hall

Tickets available now from the School Office.
Get your friends together for a great night out.
Lots of Prizes to be WON

Raffle Drawn on the Night for a
\$1000 Coles Myer Gift Card